HUMBLEWOOD®

Beyond the Canopy

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Credits

Writing and Game Design: Sharang Biswas, TK Johnson, Jennifer Kretchmer, Kat Kruger, Verity Lane, Serena Langton, Luis Medina, Chris Pinch, Jordan Richer

Editors: Andrea Bruce, Matt Click, Scott Fitzgerald Gray, Verity Lane, Jordan Richer

Special Thanks: Ryan Burns, Amelia Duri, Cortni Fernandez, Victoria Jeffery, Allie McAllister, Matei Monoranu, Ceara O'Malley, Cristina Pirvu, TR Rowe, Mike Wong, Sebastian Yūe, Michael Rusakov, Command Creative Studios: (Robert Altschuler; Tommy Pedrini; Chiyoko Yamasato; Jason Zaffary), Tableflip Foundry, The Crafty Gamer, Yaniir, Elderwood Academy

Graphic Designers: Ricardo Evangelho, Madison Pflance

Producer: Ricardo Evangelho

Project Managers: Torin Assal, Ricardo Evangelho, Chris Mahon

Content Leads: Verity Lane, Jordan Richer

Art Directors: Brian Scott Walters

Cover Illustrator: Steve Prescott

Interior Illustrators: Christina Bindon, Josiah "Jo" Cameron, Vadim Ciocazan, Emily Fiegenshush, Liam Gregg, Chuck Grieb, Lauren Henderson, David Hoffrichter, Risa Hulett, Sam Key, Emory Kjelsberg, Christina Kraus, Brendan Lancaster, Annelise Mak, Julia Metzger, Aaron Miller, Scott Murphy, Irina Nordsol, Riccardo Piova, Cristina Pirvu, Marzena Piwowar, Vinod Rams, Olivia Rea, Alannah Rose, Chris Seaman, Nine Simpson, Andrea Sipl, Alyse Stewart, Mariah Tekulve, Tiffany Turrill

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Lauren Henderson

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Chapter 2

2 Religion Across Wesden

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In Everden, folk honor the Amaranthines. These spirits protect the connection with the Great Rhythm, the source of life and magic in the world. Some Amaranthines are more prominent in certain regions or among specific folk, but these forces are everywhere in some form. Just as nature differs from place to place, the depictions of Amaranthines also differ. For example, Clhuran, Amaranthine of fate and fortune, is claimed as a patron deity by both the lumas of Humblewood and the seetas of the Tanglewilds. In northern Wesden, Clhuran is depicted as a dual figure: a dove and a pigeon carrying a jester's staff and an axe. Meanwhile, in the south, Clhuran is envisioned as a parrot with bright plumage on one side of his body, with plucked, featherless skin on the other.

Two primordial Amaranthines, Ardea the Dawnmother and Tyton the Nightfather, are universally included in all religious traditions, though their roles shift depending on who is telling a story about them. According to traditions in Humblewood, the birdfolk Amaranthines were raised to their positions by Ardea and Tyton, but according to tales from southern Wesden, all the Amaranthines, save for Gaspard, are children of the primordial Amaranthines. Across Wesden, the Amaranthines introduced in the ***Humblewood Campaign Setting*** are represented in various ways. Despite this, differing opinions about their depictions or origins rarely flourish into hot disputes.

Clhuran as envisioned in the Tanglewilds

AMARANTHINE ACROSS WESDEN

Outside of Humblewood, other Amaranthines are more prominent. Mirroring the lesser distinction between birdfolk and other folk beyond the Wood, these Amaranthines are not divided into birdfolk and non-birdfolk pantheons. These Wesden Amaranthines were not covered in the ***Humblewood Campaign Setting***. They have a few devotees in the Humblewood region, but their worship is widespread beyond it.

Nine Simpson

WIDER AMARANTHINE

Wider Wesden's Amaranthines

Amaranthine	Alignment	Dominions	Suggested Domains	Symbol
Arghan the Unbroken	CN	Ambition, Endurance, Willpower, Mountains, the Sky, Caprans	Forge, Knowledge, Tempest	A pair of horns above a mountain
Eresutha the Hidden	CG	The Moon, Espionage, Mysteries, Subtlety, Wayfinding, Elurans	Arcana, Night, Trickery	A cat's eye with a crescent moon as its pupil
Gebbo the Reveler	CE	Celebration, Desire, Feasting, Indulgence, Pleasure, Tilias	Life, Trickery, War	A three-headed lizard with a spiral tail
Khaluz the Bold	LG	The Sun, Courage, Language, Leadership, Understanding, Elurans	Knowledge, Light, Order	A cat's eye with the sun as its pupil
Ostelo the Sacrifice	NG	Grief, Love, Loss, Passion, Selflessness, Sylphs	Community, Peace, Twilight	A curved needle piercing a heart
Ranzang the Connector	LN	Bonds, Friendships, Honor, Oaths, Wilderness, Mustels	Community, Life, Nature	A paw-shaped honeycomb with raised claws

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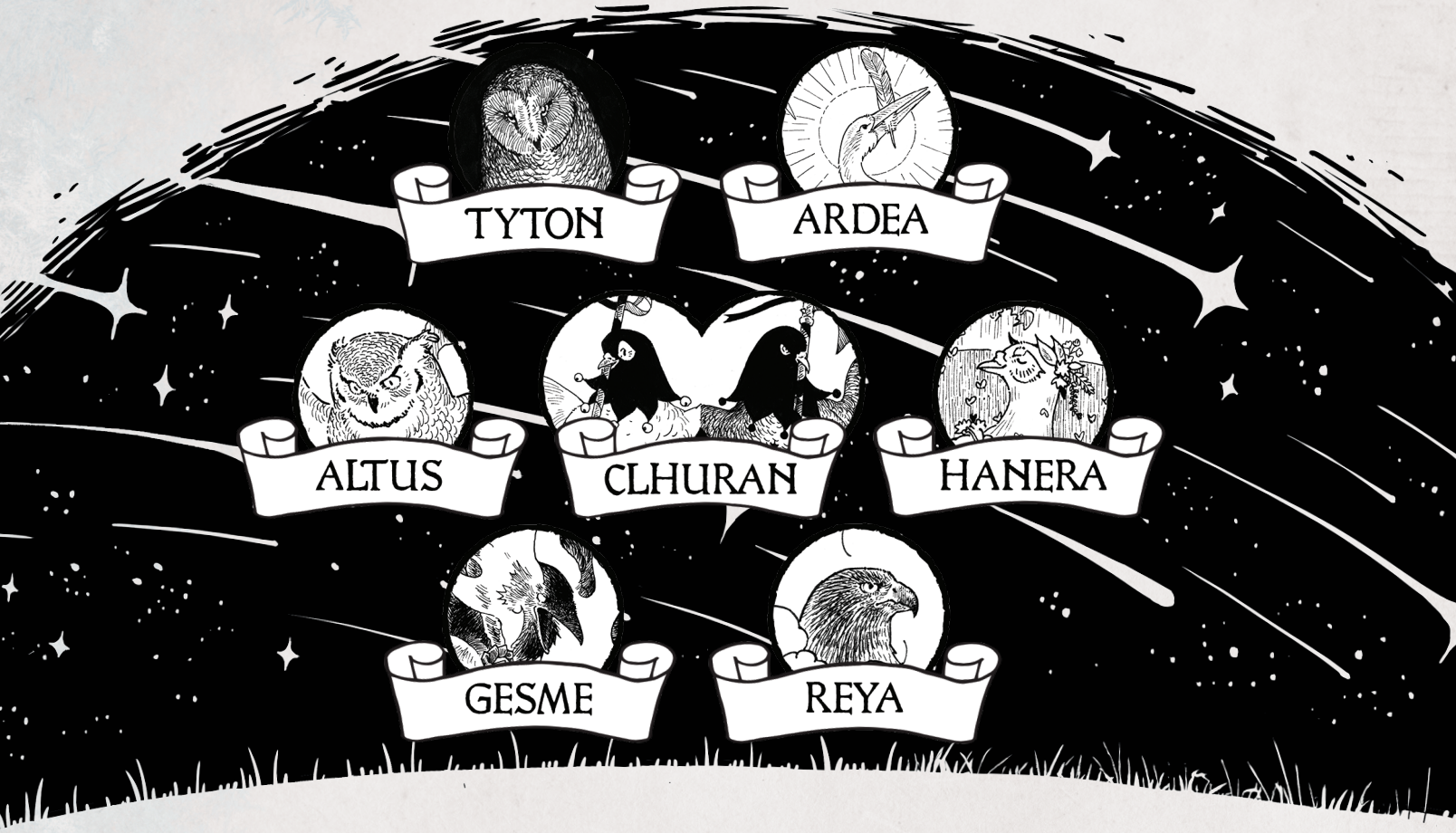
BIRD FOLK AMARANTHINE



Humblewood Amaranthines Across Wesden

Amaranthine	Depictions	Dominions
Altus the Enduring	**Firnveldt, Frostcaps, Humblewood, Stormcrag:** A horned owl pouring storm clouds from a chalice **Tanglewilds:** A spectacled owl pouring a flood from a bowl	Storms, Winter, Strength, Endurance, Change, Strigs
Ardea the Dawnmother	**Firnveldt:** A gargath with a flowery mane **Frostcaps:** A ptarmigan with flowers gathered under her wings **Humblewood:** A stork with shining golden feathers wreathed in flowers **Stormcrag:** A chinchilla carrying a basket of bread and flowers **Tanglewilds:** A toucan with flowers for eyes	Day, Life, Birth, Renewal, Healing, Familial Love
Cairith the Resolute	**Humblewood, Stormcrag:** A stag with antlers covered in moss and flowering vines **Firnveldt, Tanglewilds:** A deer whose body is made from grass **Frostcaps:** A reindeer with antlers draped with moss	Growth, Strength, Resolve, Nature, Cervans
Clhuran the Fickle	**Firnveldt, Frostcaps, Humblewood:** A dove jester and a pigeon executioner **Stormcrag, Tanglewilds:** A parrot with brilliant plumage on the left side and plucked bare skin on the right	Luck, Fate, Magic, Divination, Destiny, Trickery, Lumas, Seetas
Gaspard the Champion	**Firnveldt, Frostcaps, Humblewood, Stormcrag, Tanglewilds:** A jerbeen wielding a rapier	Courage, Chivalry, Community, Compassion, Honor, Jerbeens
Gesme the Brilliant	**Firnveldt, Frostcaps, Humblewood:** A raven wreathed in flames **Stormcrag:** A raven wreathed in lightning **Tanglewilds:** A black panther with a flaming tongue	Knowledge, Fire, Innovation, Creativity, Experimentation, Corvums

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HUMBLEFOLK AMARANTHINE

Hanera the Provider	**Firnveldt, Frostcaps, Humblewood, Stormcrag, Tanglewilds:** A pheasant with a mix of feathers and foliage	Earth, Soil, Plants, Seeds, Hearths, Compassion, Gallus
Hath the Whisperer	**Firnveldt, Frostcaps, Humblewood:** A raccoon with a body composed of stars **Stormcrag, Tanglewilds:** A red panda with a body composed of stars	Fear, Doubt, Secrets, Night, the Unknown, Mapachs
Henwin the Kind	**Frostcaps, Humblewood:** A hedgehog carrying a yellow rose **Firnveldt, Stormcrag, Tanglewilds:** An armadillo emerging from a yellow geode	Kindness, Nature, Balance, Protection, Plants, Hedges
Kren the Sly	**Firnveldt, Humblewood, Stormcrag, Tanglewilds**: A shadowy fox **Frostcaps:** A white fox with a blizzard for a tail	Guile, Darkness, Predators, Trickery, Hunger, Dangerous Nature, Cunning, Vulpins
Reya the Explorer	**Firnveldt:** Four sheep with cloud-like wool, each facing a cardinal direction **Frostcaps:** An osprey clutching a bow in her talons **Humblewood:** A hawk clutching a bow in her talons **Stormcrag:** A condor clutching an arrow in her talons **Tanglewilds:** A harpy eagle clutching a bow in her talons	Freedom, Exploration, Hunting, Archery, Travel, Journeys, Raptors
Tyton the Nightfather	**Firnveldt:** A black goat with six horns **Frostcaps:** A black wolverine with the moon in his jaws **Humblewood:** An immense black barn owl **Stormcrag:** A vulture with starry wings **Tanglewilds:** A stark white hummingbird with a patch of the night sky on his throat	Night, Time, Aging, Memory, Natural Death

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Arghan

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ALIGNMENT

Chaotic Neutral

DOMAIN

Forge, Knowledge, Tempest

DOGMA

Stand firm in your freedom.

HOLY SYMBOL

A pair of ram horns above a mountain

Arghan is the Amaranthine of willpower, mountains, and the sky. He is usually depicted as a mighty mountain goat with large, curved horns and fur that fades into clouds. His horns and hooves are composed of craggy mountain stone that crackles with lightning. Arghan decrees that all deserve freedom and that freedom can be claimed by those willing to speak their truth and stand their ground.

In the dawning days of Everden, Arghan clashed with his elder brother, Cairith, in an argument that shook the world to its roots. Arghan could not bear the sluggish pace at which Cairith nurtured the growth of the cervans. The two brothers fought, horns locked, their steaming breath forming great clouds. Just when it seemed Cairith had bested Arghan, Arghan stamped his mighty hooves with such force that the earth folded beneath him, splitting northern Wesden in two and forming the mighty Horned Ridge Mountains between Humblewood and Firnveldt. As Arghan rose high into the clouds atop the perilous peaks, he vowed never to be bridled again. The cervans who followed him across these new mountains became the first caprans.

As the patron Amaranthine of the caprans, Arghan taught his folk to live where land and sky meet so they could test their mettle. Though mountains are Arghan's domain, his clerics in the grasslands of Firnveldt believe that elevation does not matter, only the willingness to face challenges wherever they are found. Argahn's followers pray for his blessings when their will is being tested, but they never ask for his aid, believing that fortune is forged through actions and deeds, not through divine intervention.

Temples to Arghan stand open to the sky, and ceremonies honoring him occur no matter the weather. Piles of stones called cairns are constructed by his followers in wild places to mark long journeys and triumphs over adversity. At the Great Gatherings in Firnveldt, communities hold a Grand Clash in Arghan's honor. These competitions are a mix of heated philosophical debates, tests of endurance, and outright brawls. Ahead of these bouts, folk call out a traditional prayer: "My resolve is stone, my heart the sky."

Lauren Henderson & Nine Simpson

Eresutha

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ALIGNMENT

Chaotic Good

DOMAIN

Arcana, Night, Trickery

DOGMA

Let shadows hide your secrets.

HOLY SYMBOL

A cat's eye with a crescent moon as its pupil

When Ardea's dawn and Tyton's night first encountered the sparks of creation, their primal brilliance was so great that the dawn and the night split into two. Amidst gold and silver rays, two feline Amaranthines were born. As young celestial beings they bounded, tussled, and pounced across the sky. They were the Sisters of Light—Eresutha, Amaranthine of the moon, and her sibling, Khaluz, Amaranthine of the sun. Together, they share the responsibility of being the patrons of the elurans.

Eresutha casts her silver light on hidden paths as the Amaranthine of the moon, magic, and mysteries. She is depicted as a pale snow leopard with one shining silver eye—the other was scratched out by her sister during their great quarrel that created the Tanglewilds. The opening and closing of Eresutha's remaining eye stewards the moon's phases. A mercurial Amaranthine, Eresutha guides her followers with her bright full moon aspect and vexes them with her dark form as the new moon.

Moon elurans credit Eresutha with their magical healing abilities. It is said that after every sibling fight, Eresutha licks Khaluz's wounds and purrs away her pain as the sisters forgive each other. Wizards, warlocks, and rogues seek Eresutha's blessing when seeking out knowledge, attempting artful deceptions, or hiding their intentions. A traditional whispered prayer to Eresutha goes, "Light my way and confuse my enemies."

Eresutha has a deep but complicated connection with Hath the Whisperer, the equally mysterious Amaranthine of the stars. Some believe they are one being, while others say Eresutha hunts Hath during the full moon and is the reason Hath is so distant from the world. Another legend told in distant lands beyond Wesden holds that Eresutha wasn't the original Amaranthine of the moon but that she claimed the position after slaying her predecessor.

Bards sing of Eresutha's mystical labyrinth upon the moon, where she resides during the day. Her temples reflect her legendary abode as they are built to be maze-like and intentionally confusing to outsiders. The winding corridors are inlaid with silver clues, but some say her clerics can move the walls. Those few supplicants who reach the central shrine at a temple's heart may ask her for a blessing. However, one can never be sure whether Eresutha will grant the request or bestow the asker with an unsolicited gift of strange knowledge instead.

Nine Simpson

Gebbo

ALIGNMENT

Chaotic Evil

DOMAIN

Life, Trickery, War

DOGMA

Glory in all of life's pleasures.

HOLY SYMBOL

A three-headed lizard with a spiral tail

As the most extreme of the Amaranthine, Gebbo the Reveler is loved and feared. They are most often depicted as a chameleon with three heads posed in revelry—dancing, devouring, or gleefully rampaging. Though many consider them to be an evil Amaranthine, the truth is more complex: Gebbo's alignment, intentions, and patterns of their skin shift from moment to moment.

The Amaranthine of desire, Gebbo celebrates breaking limits. Every transcendent performance, epic conflict, and ruinous disaster feeds their insatiable hunger for sensation. They do not care if the feelings they inspire are joyful ecstasy or raging bloodlust. Any emotion running rampant honors Gebbo.

Each of Gebbo's three heads pursues its own fanatical focus. The first is dedicated to delights, indulging in the soft pleasures of life. The central head is motivated by greed for material things. It wants to hold and consume all of Everden. The third head longs for the sweet release of destruction as conflict and fury drive its every thought. The three heads constantly bicker among themselves, so Gebbo never settles on one path of action for long. It is said that if they could concentrate on a single desire, they could bring about the end of the world.

Gebbo is the patron spirit of the tilia. Their teachings encourage them to embrace desire and drink deeply of life's experiences. Devout tilia carry out an annual cycle of festivities called Gebbo's Revels based on the changing seasons and celestial events. They believe these celebrations ensure the year continues to turn. Should the rhythm of the year not be marked with sufficient enthusiasm to please the first two heads, they allow Gebbo's third head to rampage, bringing suffering and disaster.

Gebbo is popular among all those who seek pleasure or wealth. Many rich merchants wear amulets bearing their holy symbol, though rarely displayed openly. "Gebbo, drive me beyond!" is shouted by his barbarian and bard followers. Temples to Gebbo take many forms but always include a large space where a revel can be held. Hidden beneath the public areas of the temple, some contain secret gladiatorial arenas, feasting halls, or hoards of treasure.

Nina Simpson

Khaluz

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ALIGNMENT

Lawful Good

DOMAIN

Knowledge, Light, Order

DOGMA

Let light reveal your true courage.

HOLY SYMBOL

A cat's eye with the sun as its pupil

Sister to Eresutha, Khaluz is the Amaranthine of the sun, courage, and leadership. She is depicted as a saber-toothed lioness surrounded by a mane of brilliant solar fire. The siblings' legendary duels are told in many tales, and the creation of the Tanglewilds is attributed to their blood and tears. Yet, the sisters share a deep love. Solar eclipses are said to occur when Khaluz and Eresutha draw close and nestle together in mutual forgiveness. During this time, folk can ask for a great boon to be granted by both Amaranthines. In contrast to her mysterious sibling, Khaluz is forthright and clear in her expectations for her followers—be brave.

Khaluz's light illuminates the truth, and she calls folk to be true to themselves and their convictions. The eluran leaders of the Tanglewilds claim to be her regents, chosen by the Amaranthine to rule until the day she descends from the sky to claim the throne from them. Khaluz is also revered as an Amaranthine who brings understanding through her illuminating light. Legends say she created the Eluran script and gifted it to her folk so that they could come to know each other better.

The roar of the sun elurans is said to be a blessing from Khaluz, allowing them to express their inner fire as a magical sound. Leaders seek the blessing of Khaluz to rouse their people with fiery speeches, while fighters and paladins look to her to find the strength to do what is necessary. Many pray to the Khaluz in times of despair, "May your light show us what is needed."

As the sun can be seen in the sky over all of Everden, Khaluz enjoys widespread worship, except in areas like Humblewood, where her role is ascribed to Ardea, the Dawnmother, instead. Elsewhere, Khaluz is thought to have a special relationship with Ardea, and tales often speak of them traveling together with the solar Amaranthine protecting the Dawnmother.

Khaluz's temples allow light to pour through stained glass or paneless openings. Lines of shadow and sunlight formed by pillars or windows clearly mark paths that her followers travel to reach Khaluz's golden altars, where offerings of meat are traditional.

Nine Simpson

Ostelo

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ALIGNMENT

Neutral Good

DOMAIN

Community, Peace, Twilight

DOGMA

Live your life in love and give your life for love.

HOLY SYMBOL

A curved needle piercing through a heart.

Ostelo is the Amaranthine of love, loss, and sacrifice. She is most often depicted as a hummingbird with long, swooping tail feathers and a floating skull for a head. Her eye sockets bloom with flowers, and her curved beak drips blood. Though her depictions tend to be morbid, she is considered one of the gentlest Amaranthines.

Ostelo is the patron spirit of the sylphs. It is said she understands what the inner self truly loves and that she sheds petal tears whenever hearts deny their true calling. She spurs sylphs' wanderlust by allowing them to feel the pull of their hearts more strongly than other folk. While some simply follow Ostelo's first teaching of following their passions, devout followers also try to embody Ostelo's altruistic courage and kindle selflessness within themselves. A traditional prayer whispered by her followers goes, "Ostelo, let my heart guide me."

Folk are drawn to pray to Ostelo in moments of great love and loss. When one's future hangs in the balance, it is said Ostelo hovers behind your back. Ostelo is also known as the silent one. She brings solace to those in grief and celebrates the kinds of love that words cannot express. Her clerics work tirelessly to understand their enigmatic Amaranthine, with no expectation that they will ever hear a message from her.

Ostelo's temples are places of comfort and contemplation for those who have faced loss or are at a crossroads in life. They are adorned with flowers and skulls, real and carved, as a reminder that the cycle of life and death is natural. Those who have sacrificed themselves to save others are enshrined at Ostelo's temples, and it is believed that Ostelo personally escorts them to Tyton the Nightfather's lands of the dead. In contrast with Ostelo's silence, her temples are filled with music as her clerics sing the songs that their Amaranthine cannot. They are popular places to celebrate marriages, births, adoptions, celebrations of life, and any other ceremony that expresses love. Ostelo's teachings say pain blooms after loss only because it was planted in love, and both should be cherished.

Nina Simpson

Ranzang

ALIGNMENT

Lawful Neutral

DOMAIN

Community, Life, Nature

DOGMA

You are in the world and of the world.

HOLY SYMBOL

A honeycomb paw with raised claws

Ranzang is the Amaranthine of connection. He is depicted as a six-legged badger with strong claws and a coat of intersecting stripes. Ranzang is said to dwell within a great underground network of tunnels that extends throughout Everden. Although tales are told of folk falling into these tunnels and being accidentally whisked away to distant lands on the Amaranthine's back, most clerics say that the tunnels are metaphorical, representing the interconnectedness of all things.

Ranzang tends to the Great Rhythm with care, nurturing bonds the same way a skilled gardener recognizes the relationships between a seed, soil, water, air, and sunlight. He encourages all to honor the innate bond they have with the Great Rhythm, as one cannot approach it with dishonesty in one's heart. Those who keep their word please the Amaranthine. However, Ranzang is not only concerned with the folk but the whole of Everden. His devout followers push themselves to expand their circle of empathy to encompass not only those like them but stones, rivers, trees, and all living creatures. There is no distinction between nature and civilization in Ranzang's teachings, as everyone is as much a part of the natural world as the plants and animals are.

As the patron Amaranthine of the mustels, Ranzang instills the value of faithfulness into his people. Mustel culture reveres the sanctity of oaths as a form of unbreakable bond. Devout mustels may still be relatively solitary rather than gregarious as they believe the quality and depth of one's connections are more important than the quantity. To be insincere is considered almost as bad as breaking an oath. Ranzang's clerics teach that to best connect with others, one must first be on good terms with oneself and the land with the prayer, "Do as you intend. Be as you are intended."

Large temples to Ranzang are built underground and used for commitment ceremonies of all kinds. When a solemn agreement is made within, oath stones are exchanged as a sacred reminder. Smaller shrines to Ranzang often serve practical purposes, such as well-stocked lodges for weary travelers.

Lauren Henderson & Nine Simpson

Arghans first
skyward steps

Tales of the Amaranthine

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Across Wesden, tales of the Amaranthine are passed down from generations to generation or brought to the region by traveling bards. These tales help folk better understand themselves and know the world around them.

Climb the Sky, A Tale of Arghan

Long, long ago, when Arghan and Cairith were still young and had not yet grown their horns, the two brothers set out on a journey together through a great forest. As the elder, Cairith led the way, stopping often to appreciate the beauty of the slow-growing mosses and patterns made by light shining through the trees. Arghan, impatient with the journey's pace, strayed from the path set by his brother. Each time Arghan wandered, Cairith, guided by a gift of prophecy called The Sight, warned Arghan about a danger that lay ahead.

Frustration grew within Arghan like a storm on the horizon. Unlike his brother, he had no gift for seeing the future, nor did he wish for it. He longed to be challenged by the unexpected without Cairith's calm words of advice shaping his plans. Whenever he ignored Cairith, he met the exact misery predicted, but if he listened to Cairith and avoided the danger, Arghan's heart thundered with rebellious discontent.

One day, Cairith called his younger brother to shelter with him under a ledge just before the first drops of rain began to fall. Arghan looked up through the branches of the trees as a great white shape trailing clouds flew overhead. Atlus the Enduring was summoning a great storm in his wake. Cold rain soaked into Arghan's thick wool as his brother called him to safety and comfort.

If only Arghan could venture somewhere Cairith could never predict, then he would be free from prophecy. The young Amaranthine took a step, not toward his brother, but up onto a raindrop. Arghan believed that he could stand on top of the rain and, by sheer force of will, he made it so. Cairith called out in surprise and concern as Arghan used the falling rain as an impossibly precipitous staircase.

Neither Cairith nor his voice were able to follow Arghan as he leapt up beyond the canopy of the forest, up through battering wind, and even up through Atlus' chilling layer of clouds, until he reached the unbroken expanse of blue sky above. Wisps of cloud clung to Arghan as he surveyed his new domain. Until now, the sky had been the realm of the birdfolk Amaranthines. However, through sheer determination, Arghan claimed it as his own, setting himself apart from his brother for the first but not the last time.

Groff's Amazing Journey, A Tale of Ranzang

Once upon a time, an ornery mustel named Groff lived alone in the high mountains of the Frostcaps. He could find fault with everything. Everyone knew to stay well clear of Groff and his cruel tongue lest he unleash a tirade about their flaws. He never descended down into the valley to join in the celebrations of the village below, and when he absolutely had to interact with others, they irritated him with their useless chatter.

One day, as Groff was out hunting alone, the earth rumbled and cracked beneath him. The mustel tumbled down into a dark abyss, until suddenly he found himself being lifted up and carried on a wide furry back. Groff clung desperately to the braided black and white fur of his savior, Ranzang the Connector. Ranzang leapt from rock to rock using his six mighty legs, bounding out of the fissure before diving down and burrowing into the earth with his powerful claws. Groff fussed loudly but Ranzang either did not hear or heed Groff's furious complaints.

For a whole day and an entire night, Groff held tight to Ranzang's fur as the Amaranthine surged along the winding underground tunnels that form the Amaranthine's subterranean realm. Here and there, Ranzang emerged into the world above, and Groff saw strange places and things—a huge tree filled with folk, grasslands so wide they seemed like a sea, lush islands in a sparkling ocean, and a storm-wracked mountainside where folk and strange lizards lived together.

Groff's wild ride finally came to an end when exhaustion overwhelmed him. He could no longer hold on. Groff let go and fell off Ranzang's back, landing hard in the branches of a broad-leaved tree. The Amaranthine continued onwards out of sight.

The air around Groff was hot, sticky, and filled with the buzz of insects. A sylph named Deftly was looking up at him, beak wide with astonishment. The birdfolk helped Groff down from the tree and took him to her home to rest. Though Groff hated to accept help, for the first time in his life, he was too exhausted to complain.

As Groff regained his strength, Deftly explained that he had landed in the Tanglewilds. Once recovered, Groff prepared for the long trek back to the Frostcaps. While departing, Groff voiced his first genuine thank you as he had nothing else to give Deftly in return for her kindness. Touched by his earnest gratitude and recognizing that Groff could probably use a companion, Deftly insisted on accompanying Groff, cheerfully ignoring all of his protestations. It took the pair a year and a day to make the trip back north. Along the way, they faced dangers, saw extraordinary things, and relied on the help of many strangers. With each encounter, Groff's heart opened up a little more.

By the time Groff reached his home valley, he was a transformed mustel. The villagers were shocked to see him, but they were even more surprised when he eagerly embraced them one by one. They welcomed the changed Groff and his dear friend, Deftly, with warmth. From then on, Groff was known as the kindest and most helpful of folk. He lived out the rest of his days surrounded by rich and deep friendships, thankful to the very end that his amazing journey taught him the value of connecting with others.

How Gebbo Got Three Heads, A Tale of Gebbo

Ancient tilia tales tell that from the moment Gebbo the Reveler hatched, they were filled with desire from the tip of their grasping tongue to the end of their spiraling tail. Everything they saw delighted them. Gebbo scampered about, flitting their attention from this beautiful flower to that sparkling gem, unable to fully satiate his wonderment and always starving for more. Even with two eyes able to look in different directions, Everden was filled with too many marvels for Gebbo to take in all at once.

The more Gebbo saw, the more their appetite grew. Observing and admiring wasn't enough; Gebbo wanted to consume and possess everything, too. Faced with a tilia presenting them with an offering of a delicious and intricately decorated insect-cake, Gebbo's conflicted longing grew unbearable. Gebbo's neck bulged, and a second head emerged. The new head opened its jaws wide and without hesitation, Gebbo shoved the cake and the unlucky tilia into their gaping mouth. Gebbo's new head was ravenous. While the first head only wanted to admire Everden's beauty, the second lived to devour it.

The two heads often quarreled, finding themselves unable to compromise. One night, the two heads came to an utter impasse as they could not agree whether to attend a concert or a banquet held in their honor. As unfulfilled desire overwhelmed Gebbo once more, the Amaranthine writhed as a third head erupted from their neck. The new head swiveled its eyes and observed the world not with the soft gaze of delight, nor the hungry gaze of greed, but with an unblinking, rageful stare of destructive fury. If Gebbo couldn't admire and possess the whole world at the same time, then they would destroy it.

The third head commanded the body to move forward, and an earthquake radiated out. Gebbo whirled their spiraled tail faster and faster, whipping up a destructive tornado. Craving even more havoc, the third head opened its mouth and let out a hiss that roused the folk of Everden into a fury that matched Gebbo's own. Neighbors turned against neighbors in bloody battles as Gebbo ravaged the world.

As Everden fell into chaos, folk tried to hide from the Amaranthine's frenzy. A conclave of tilia clerics gathered together in celebration, determined to help their wayward patron remember the wonders of music, dancing, and delicious desserts. They hoped to appeal to Gebbo's gentler aspect. Rageful Gebbo stormed into their midst, but the clerics did not cease their revels. As the third head raised a claw to strike down the twirling chief cleric, the first head willed the body to join the dancing and the second head directed them toward the sumptuous array of food and drink. Overpowered by their other heads' desires, the destructive head lost control. And so, Gebbo's first rampage ended. However, should Gebbo not be sufficiently entertained, their third, destructive head will gain dominion over Gebbo once more and bring utter ruin to Everden.

Light in the Darkest Depths, A Tale of Khaluz and Eresutha

One day, Eresutha was dipping her paw into the ocean, making tides ebb and flow when she paused, whiskers twitching with curiosity. Her sister Khaluz padded down from the sky. "What are you doing, sister?"

Eresutha's ears perked up. "I have discovered a secret. Look to the bottom of the ocean. There is a chasm so deep that neither the light of your sun nor my moon has ever touched it."

Hot-tempered Khaluz growled with rage. "Injustice! Nothing escapes my radiance. I shall illuminate it with my brilliance."

Eresutha, not entirely surprised by Khaluz's quick temper, tried to sooth Khaluz with her soft voice, but Khaluz knocked her away. Hurt, Eresutha retreated to the moon to watch her sister from afar.

Khaluz roared and the sun's light shone brighter than ever. Plants surged upwards, shadows fled, and the waves became more ordered. Yet even as the ocean's surface sparkled like gemstones, Khaluz's sunlight could not reach the chasm. With an even louder roar, she urged the sun to shine brighter still. Plants burned, watering holes evaporated, and life languished in the heat. The golden light pierced deeper into the ocean than ever before, but still, it didn't reach the chasm.

Though Khaluz is forthright and forceful, she couldn't go against her own orderly nature and upset the natural balance of day and night, so eventually she allowed the sun to set. The sky darkened, and anxious that the world would succumb to disorder, the majestic Amaranthine wept. Her briny tears fell into the ocean, giving the waters their salt.

Shimmering in the dusk, Eresutha approached. "Why are you crying, Sister?"

"With my sunlight, I light the path to perfection. But conquering this darkness is beyond me."

Eresutha rubbed against Khalu'z side and purred, "I will help." Eresutha swiped a paw into the sea and plucked up a fish. She whispered to it, "Little one, we shall share our light with you, and you shall bring light where none have known its touch. This task will fill you with purpose as our light fills your life." Eresutha licked the fish and gave it a mote of light to carry upon its brow like a lantern.

"Lantern fish," Eresutha giggled to herself before she looked at her sister with her silver eye. "It will travel to the darkest depths of the ocean, bringing with it your flame of order and my guiding light."

Khaluz asked, "Why did you help me after I was cruel?"

Eresutha placed her head against her sister's. "Isolation feeds the flames of wrath. And just like the dark chasm, even if challenging, the light of love will eventually reach you."

Filled with love for her sister, Eresutha blinked and the moon phase shifted, revealing a bright full moon. "Tonight, let's unite people. Let the moon light the path of those searching for their lost loved ones."

Khaluz nuzzled Eresutha's shoulder as she felt a sense of order wash over her.

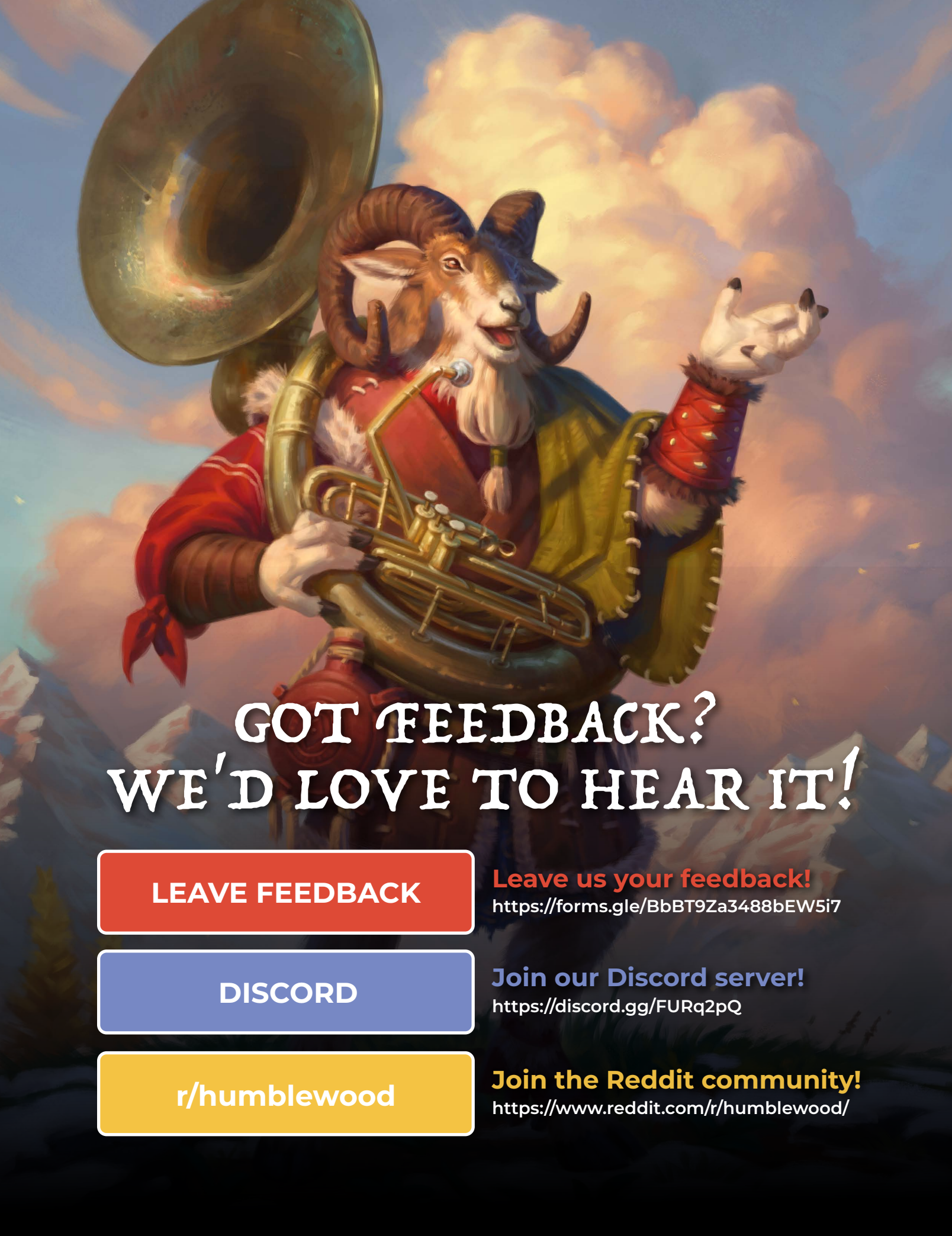
Sacrifice and Silence, A Tale of Ostelo

Sylph legends of Ostelo's birth claim she was the first-hatched child of Ardea the Dawnmother and Tyton the Nightfather. Created from the bond between the two primordial Amaranthines, she was ordained the Amaranthine of love. From the moment of her hatching, Ostelo sang Everden a love song that wove notes of kindness and adoration into the fabric of the young world.

However, while Everden was still forming, a terrible and ancient force of Silence interrupted the Great Rhythm. It swept across the land, erasing everything Ardea and Tyton had crafted until it reached the nest where the young Ostelo and her yet unhatched siblings sat. The Silence attempted to alter the eggs, trying to make them empty echoes of its will. Though only a half-feathered chick, Ostelo threw herself over the eggs, protecting them.

When Ardea and Tyton could no longer hear Ostelo's song, they flew back to the nest on wings as swift as thought. Confronted with the power of the two mighty Amaranthine, The Silence fled back to the empty land it had already claimed. The presence of both great Amaranthines brought about an eclipse, covering Everden in a blanket of darkness. In the eerie twilight, they saw that their eggs were whole and unharmed by the Silence. However, Ostelo was found lifeless, having sacrificed her life to protect her siblings. Only her bones, wings, and long tail feathers remained. As Ardea and Tyton became locked in a profound sense of grief, their fervent eclipse threatened to seal Everden in eternal twilight.

Unexpectedly, Ostelo's bones began to stir. Slowly, she raised her wings and looked at her grieving parents with empty eyes. Her beak opened, but no sound emerged; The Silence had stolen her voice. But when she pointed to the sky, her parents understood her meaning. Do not let your grief cause more harm to what we love. Moved by their daughter's wisdom, Ardea and Tyton returned to their domains in the Great Rhythm, ending the eclipse. From that day on, Ostelo was no longer only the Amaranthine of love; because she was so willing to give up her life for her siblings she also became the caretaker of those who grieve and sacrifice in the name of love.



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